nasturtium

MASSACHUSETTS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY
HORTICULTURAL HALL
300 MASS AVE., BOSTON 02115
Telephone 536-9280

1972 YEARBOOK ISSUE
WITH REPORTS FOR 1971

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I think it is fair to say that the year 1971 was, for the most part, a successful year for the Society. It was a particularly successful year from the financial point of view. For the first time in over 12 years the Society not only broke even, but actually made $1,488. This momentum carried over from the changes instituted by Past President Ames and compares favorably with the losses of $75,000 in 1970, $317,000 in 1969, and $487,000 in 1968. Our Treasurer, Mr. Ewell, will deal with these details shortly. However, I know you will be as thrilled as I am to hear that our figure for the year is black rather than red, even if only by a small margin.

On September 13, 1971 I sent you a "President's Letter" which dealt primarily with three major subjects: 1) HORTICULTURE, 2) the New England Spring Garden and Flower Show, and 3) the problems with Horticultural Hall and the Library.

HORTICULTURE magazine for the first time ever has made a substantial financial contribution to the Society in the amount of $77,094 on a cash flow basis, and is one of the major reasons why our overall figures were on the plus side. This subject will be covered by Vice-President Hunnewell, Chairman of the Publications Committee.

When I wrote to you last fall the future of the Spring Show was still in doubt, for as of September 13 we were still trying to negotiate a contract with Suffolk Downs for 1972. The Trustees felt that as long as the Show made at least a modest amount of money it was very important for the Society to maintain the Show and the exposure which we receive through it. It is a positive statement of that which is both good and beautiful. By now I trust you all know that the Spring Show returned to the heart of the city of Boston with a flourish and flare that was both suitable and fitting. The Commonwealth Armory never looked so well before and, in addition, generated more revenue than it consumed.

In my letter too I attacked the two questions I am asked most frequently: "What is the future of Horticultural Hall?", and "What is the future of the library?" I have made known to the membership that the special Planning Committee headed by Past President Ames has recommended that within the next four years we search for and move to new, centrally located headquarters in which we might house the Society more efficiently and with much reduced maintenance costs. I have further asserted that our library is our biggest asset, and it is certainly our intention to maintain most if not all of the collection.

The Society has made a joint proposal along with the Children's Museum to the John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Company that they seriously consider construction of a headquarters to house both our organizations in an area between Berkeley and Clarendon Streets that is now designated for demolition. They have given this serious consideration and have come back to us with an incredibly exciting counter-proposal: they suggest recycling the original Hancock Building in a most unusual way, creating a large, glass-covered open courtyard, rooftop gardens and greenhouses. I have asked Mr. Henry N. Cobb of I. M. Pei & Associates to make a presentation to us after the Annual Meeting. We have not agreed to or committed ourselves to anything except to explore the concept. I would like to assure you that, according to our By-Laws, "no sale of the Society's real estate shall be valid without a vote authorizing such sale by a majority of those present at a meeting of the Society." I know I am premature in exposing you to these plans. Yet the steps, if taken, are major ones and I want the membership to be involved from the early stages and to help us "explore the concept."

And now, a sad note — it is with great sorrow that I report the death of Milford R. Lawrence during the past year. Mr. Lawrence was an active member of the Board for 15 years beginning in 1956. On May 3, 1971 he was elected an Honorary Trustee and served in this capacity until his death on June 28th. The Society never had a better friend, and we shall all miss him dearly.

I would like to thank the three retiring Trustees who have all served the Society so well. Mrs. C. Norman Collard, Past President of the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts, represented that organization very effectively on our Board and brought the two organizations closer together. Mr. Edmund V. Mezitt, retiring after six years, has served on the Exhibitions and Nominating Committees and has given freely of his professional and personal advice. In addition, he has been most generous in providing outstanding plant materials which have added immeasurably to the interest of events in Horticultural Hall. Mrs. G. Kennard Wakefield is retiring after nine years of very active service and has served not only as Chairman of the Library Committee but also as Chairman of the Committee on Gardens for the entire time she has been on the Board. I would like to thank them for their past service; as of today, they are happily appointed Trustees Emeriti

During this past year we were very kindly remembered in a number of wills and received bequests of over $5,000. This has been an important source of funds for the Society over the years. The Annual Fund Drive generated $66,000 during 1971. The membership has been generous in subscribing to this Fund, yet I regret to say that this year we are almost $25,000 behind where we were at this time in 1971. The significance of the Fund cannot be stressed enough. To emphasize the point, I would like you to subtract the $66,000 from our small profit shown for the year and then see where we would be. I would like to thank all those responsible for their generous giving and their loyal support. You have made my first year as your President a very exciting and happy one.

Russell B. Clark, President

TRUSTEES EMERITI

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Robert G. Stone, Dedham
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Mrs. G. Kennard Wakefield, Milton

TREASURER'S REPORT

As you will note from the agenda you will be hearing later from Mr. Hunnewell and Mr. Lund, who will report on the financial aspects of HORTICULTURE and the Exhibitions Committee respectively. My report will be more general in nature and all figures will be related to the fiscal year ending December 31, 1971.

The year 1971, for a variety of reasons, was a good year for the Society. Probably the most dramatic item is the fact that for the first time since 1959, a period of 12 years, the Society showed a net income rather than a loss. The amount, $1,488, was small, but was encouraging when compared to a loss of $75,181 in 1970, and an accumulation of losses in excess of two million dollars over the preceding five years.

Investment income held steady at $40,000, gifts and bequests were $2,600 greater than in 1970, and fund raising efforts (as previously reported by Mr. Clark) produced $66,000 compared to $63,900 — an increase of $2,300, with related expenses dropping approximately $8,000 from 1970.

Program activities showed a remarkable change, netting $57,000 compared to a loss in 1970 of $27,000; this was primarily due to HORTICULTURE. Rentals of the building were nearly $2,500 ahead of last year. All of this resulted in total revenues of $225,061 compared to $121,538, a jump of over $100,000.

It would be pleasant to report that expenses had decreased as much as income had increased, but unfortunately such was not the case. However, in this year of inflation it is considered that the overall increase of $26,000 in expenses for the year was conservative. Salary increases were held to less than three percent.

So, in summary, 1971 was a good year. I wish I could be completely optimistic for 1972 but there are variables such as HORTICULTURE that are very unpredictable. We will be accomplishing a savings of at least $15,000 annually in security costs for the building when the burglar and fire protection system is completed this month. We have also reduced our bank loan by $50,000 to $100,000, and should not have to re-borrow until July of this year.

John W. Ewell, Treasurer

HORTICULTURE REPORT

The year 1971 was a very satisfactory one for HORTICULTURE. The good work performed by Mr. Stubbs over the past years produced those results.

I should like to read the report of our publisher, Philip E. Nutting, and follow that with a few comments of my own.

"Dear Sirs:

"The year end balance sheet for HORTICULTURE showing a substantial black figure speaks for itself and the effectiveness of the program we have continued to pursue.

"As a result of the many policy and operating changes effected during the past two and one-half years we now have the publication on a sound basis, which resulted in further economies of operation in 1971 and increased income from regular sources. A few examples will suffice to illustrate.

"Our income from list rental increased from $24,290 in 1970 to $49,115 in 1971, more than double. The income from advertising was up over 14 percent as a result of increased rates and the effective operation of the advertising department; 1972 is expected to show further gains. Also, Mr. King has made wide and effective use of the audience study, and reports that it has been extremely helpful in attracting new and additional advertising revenue.

"In addition to the annual savings of nearly $100,000 which was effected by engaging the Fulfillment Corporation of America we continue, through careful programming with them, to develop significant efficiencies. For example, our gross complaint figure for the period July through December dropped to less than half from the same period of the previous year. This is a dramatic improvement and, of course, is the result of many individual changes in fulfillment procedures. It also follows that the more subscribers we please the higher our renewal rate will be.

"As mentioned before, we raised our advertising rates to take advantage of our increased circulation. We also raised our subscription price to $7.00 per year effective September 1, 1971. There was not sufficient time to the end of the year to reflect a big increase in subscription income, and there are numerous factors involved; however, our subscription income did increase some 27 percent over the previous year.

"The income from the bind-in subscription cards increased from $10,096 in 1970 to $16,384 in 1971, an increase of 60 percent. Much more significant, however, the net profit on those subscriptions doubled.

"Our Christmas gift subscription promotion produced an increase of over 30 percent over 1970.

"We hope you share with us the sense of real accomplishment that today's financial picture represents over its condition when we took over in the fall of 1969. We feel confident that 1972 will continue to show a favorable posture for HORTICULTURE and, with a continuing wider scope of operation, we anticipate a significant growth pattern in the years ahead.

"Philip E. Nutting, President
Philip E. Nutting & Company"

I would like to amplify a little on some of the activities during the past year. In the early part of 1971 we took on about 40,000 new subscribers obtained by the Publishers Clearing House. This substantially increased our circulation and allowed us to increase our advertising rates and income from rental of our mailing list, as Mr. Nutting has mentioned. These were one-year subscriptions which came up for renewal in the first months of 1972. Regrettably, only a small percentage of them have actually renewed. Our circulation now is

about 115,000, compared to 150,000 at this time last year.

Last summer, before raising the subscription price of the magazine, we offered people the opportunity to subscribe for an additional two or three years at the old price. This brought us $200,000 of revenue, which was the most important factor in our favorable showing for the year. We now have some loyal readers who have subscribed beyond 1980!

I should point out that although on a cash basis we show $73,800 more cash received than spent this is not profit. We have merely taken in now what would otherwise have been future subscription income. There are many good reasons for doing this: 1) it gives us the use of the money now, 2) it enabled us to reduce our bank debt, and 3) it saves us the cost of future annual billing and follow-up of subscribers.

But it means that we will be receiving that much less subscription income in the coming years, while we still have the liability of delivering the magazine to the subscribers.

Our budget for 1972 shows an $8,200 cash loss.

In the fall we conducted a survey of our readers, the first to be made since 1965; it produced a mass of valuable information which has proved particularly helpful in increasing our advertising income.

I am perhaps less confident than Mr. Nutting as to the future. I believe we have learned how to control our costs. I am concerned that we have not yet learned how to obtain new subscribers in an economical manner, nor have we learned how to induce as high a percentage of those subscribers as I would like to renew their subscriptions.

In conclusion, I want to thank all those members of the staff who have worked very hard over the past year to make 1971 a successful year for HORTICULTURE.

Willard P. Hunnewell, Chairman
Lectures & Publications Committee

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Although there has been no spectacular increase in membership this past year, we have made a modest gain. The total membership as of December 1970 was 5,242; in December 1971 it was 5,351, with 540 new members compared to 407 in 1970. Regular membership income in 1971 was $83,180, compared to $81,381 the year before. Income from fund raising is included in the Treasurer's report.

Technically, this year's events are not a part of the report for 1971. However, I do wish to report that the Members' Council, founded in 1971, now has a memorable success to its credit in the Symposium held on April 6, 1972. Called "Gardening from the Ground Up" it attracted an attendance of 200, and was also a financial success.

In conclusion, I should like to thank the members of the staff for their cheerful help and support.

Lily B. (Mrs. Charles G.) Rice
Chairman, Membership Committee

LIBRARY REPORT

In 1971, 5,524 books were circulated and 812 packages of books were mailed to members. Fifty-one packages of garden club yearbooks were also circulated, and there were 42 inter library loans. In-house use of rare books was 103; in-house use of regular books is not counted. About 14 percent of our members are regular borrowers.

There is no record of telephone calls to the library, but it was consulted more than 50 times about book purchases for libraries, lecturers, arboreta, garden clubs, and as memorials. Copies of the catalog cards of books in the French language (850) were provided the French Library in Boston; this was made possible by the generosity of Mrs. Stanford Calderwood, one of our members.

Although all visitors are encouraged to sign the guest book, no official record is kept of those persons who come to the library for serious research. Several books have been published as a result of work done here during 1971; one is the *Time-Life Encyclopedia of Gardening*. Authors of magazine articles have used the library, as have students from Radcliffe, Northeastern University, M.I.T., Harvard, and the Universities of Delaware and Massachusetts. The nursery catalog collection was consulted by representatives of the Morton Arboretum, Arnold Arboretum and Kew, and several students and authors including Miss Manks, our Librarian Emerita, who is working on the Prince Family for *Huntia*.

The Garden Information Center answered approximately 6,000 questions by letter and telephone, and gave 51 consultations on horticultural education.

The 19th century collection was cleaned in 1971 and minor repairs were made, with funds from a Webster Foundation grant. Ten books from the rare book collection were restored with assistance from the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities. Regular operating funds were used for binding 71 periodicals and books.

The library was visited last fall by the conservators of the Pierpont Morgan Library. Their report finds the condition of the collection quite good; most of the problems pointed out are related to the condition of the building. Dr. George H. M. Lawrence, a member of the Library Committee, completed a space study and projected needs for the future based on motorized stacks, more efficient storage, and room for exhibitions of books and prints.

Robert S. Pirie
Chairman, Library Committee

EXHIBITIONS COMMITTEE

Two unique exhibitions took place in 1971. The first was the 24th Annual International Lily Show, July 9-11, in cooperation with the North American Lily Society. Lilies and lily growers came to Horticultural Hall from all over the United States and Canada for this three-day meeting and Show which, in addition to specimen lilies, featured a large exhibit of books and prints on the subject. The second was the Harvest Show in Boston City Hall in cooperation with the Plymouth-Provincetown Celebration Commission, October 5-8, which celebrated the 300th anniversary of the first Pilgrim harvest. The public response was overwhelming in its enthusiasm and was surpassed by that of city officials.

Our 100th Spring Flower Show at Suffolk Downs in March attracted 82,000 visitors. Approximately 10,000 more atten-

ded the Camellia, Rose, Lily and Harvest Shows combined, and the Orchid Prints and Plants exhibit attracted about 250.

Although it is not a part of the 1971 report I know you are interested in the results of the 1972 Spring Show. It was not until September that we knew Suffolk Downs would not be available; on October 20th we secured Commonwealth Armory. Obviously such a late start, combined with a new location, created a tremendous amount of pressure for everyone involved. When the time came for the actual setup the staff had to move into the Armory at midnight on Sunday in order to be ready for the exhibitors at eight o'clock on Monday morning; the exhibitors had only four days to create the miracle. The general reaction to the new site was favorable, and financially too it turned out to be beneficial. The Preview Party was not only a great success as a party, with many compliments on food and service, but also netted about $10,000 as compared to $4,000 in 1971. And, according to the preliminary report, the Show itself netted about $30,000, compared to $12,500 the year before.

The Spring Flower Show and all of the other exhibitions could not take place without the enthusiasm, hard work and devotion of a great many people: our nurserymen, special plant groups, institutions, Women's Exhibition Committee, Amateur Horticultural Classes Committee, Garden Club Federation, professional gardeners, the Bonsai and Ikebana groups. Literally round-the-clock devotion of the staff is frequently necessary, and in one way or another every member of it gets involved.

Some thought that our Centennial Show would be the last of the big ones, but the 101st proved them wrong. With the help of all of our members we hope to have another, even better Spring Show in 1973.

Joseph W. Lund, Chairman
Committee on Exhibitions

COMMITTEE ON GARDENS

It is not the custom for the Committee on Gardens to give an annual report since the list of Garden Awards for the year speaks for itself. As this is the end of my nine years as Chairman of the Committee and as a Trustee, it seems appropriate at this time to say a little about this activity of the Society.

The Garden Awards program has been carried on for over 100 years. From the award winners, one can almost trace the history and development of significant Massachusetts gardens. Until after World War II the medals were given solely to private gardens, but during recent years public and business organizations have been made eligible to receive the Gold, Silver and Bronze Medals as well as the Garden Certificate. Two awards are limited to private properties: the Albert C. Burrage Porch Prize and the Henry Hollis Hunnewell Medal. The first Hunnewell Medal was given in 1870, and it has since been awarded to 38 owners of estates of over three acres. The Porch Prize was established in 1929 as an award for a ". . . . porch, terrace or other addition to a house overlooking a garden."

In 1966, upon the recommendation of the Committee on Gardens, a Special Certificate was added to recognize accomplishments which the other awards did not cover. To avoid confusion the title was later changed to the Special Award of Merit, whose certificate we have newly designed and hand colored beginning with the 1971 awards that are to be given out later this afternoon.

The Garden Awards have stimulated great interest over the years by calling attention not only to achievements among individual gardeners, but also to those of corporate and public officials who recognize the importance of their surroundings in enhancing their public image and contributing to the overall environment.

Over the past nine years the Society had made awards in a geographical area extending from Manchester and Walpole to Worcester, Southbridge, Cape Cod and Nantucket to 68 private gardens, 16 public parks and institutions, 17 business organizations, three churches, the Arnold Arboretum, Mount Auburn Cemetery, Boston University and Wellesley College.

We are often asked how we decide where to go next, and why we have not visited gardens which have been suggested. The answer is that, while we try to encompass all the best gardens and plantings within the state, there are physical limitations of time and distance and we are able to cover only a limited area each year. The Chairman is continually haunted by the fear that the Committee will recommend an award for one garden while another, equally good or better, may be next door – unbeknownst and overlooked. It would be of great assistance to the Committee if members of the Society would send in written recommendations to be added to the file for future consideration. A suggestion may not be investigated for one year or five, but this does not mean it is unappreciated, it only means that the Committee is considering an area where it already knows of several good candidates. Over the past few years a number of awards were given as a result of unsolicited suggestions, and we are grateful to those who made the effort to give them. It takes courage to ring a stranger's doorbell and ask to inspect his garden without a previous recommendation, although it has been done!

Over these nine years there have been 15 members of the Gardens Committee. I am deeply grateful to them for their unfailing support, all the way from planning the itinerary to supplying just the right word in the citations. They have often devoted 12-hour days and sometimes nights away from home to the effort. Time meant nothing, and we invariably managed to discover treasures on every trip. Occasionally we found ourselves lost, and we have had a few adventures. In fact, it is entirely due to Russell Clark's skill in avoiding an accident that some of us are here today. His car was so badly damaged that it had to be junked, but not until we had visited all of the gardens scheduled for that trip! Such skill and perseverance are good omens for his term as President of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society.

Mary B. (Mrs. G. Kennard) Wakefield
Chairman, Committee on Gardens

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The year 1971 brought increasing participation of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society in the geographic community of greater Boston and the subject community of horticulture and gardens, which has no geographic boundaries.

Because of the rapidly decreasing quality of urban life, and because so much of the landscape is becoming urban, we are becoming increasingly aware of the need to be involved with the geographic community. Today's need is for everyone to understand the role of horticulture and gardens in creating

better environments. Our goal may well be stated in three verbs: PLAN; PLANT; PROTECT. There is an increasing need to communicate with people on a one-to-one basis. We learned an important lesson when we initiated what seemed to be a simple project by inviting visitors to the 1971 Spring Flower Show to go through a do-it-yourself red oak acorn planting facility. Ten thousand acorns were planted during the 1971 Show, 1,000 at Earth Day on Boston Common, and 44 kits – each for 30 students – were supplied to classrooms for Arbor Day. The overwhelming reaction of the participants proved how important is the fundamental experience of planting a seed. In fact, it was important enough to 71 of the participants that in October we received reports telling us the height, number of leaves and where each seedling had been planted, staked and mulched for the winter. Yet this new idea was also in keeping with our tradition of reaching out to the larger community. The project we created was duplicated in the 1972 Philadelphia Show.

Beginning with the March 1971 issue of HORTICULTURE we initiated a policy of monthly editorials. This was prompted largely by questions about our role in ecology, a word which has become a cause. It sometimes is tempting to join bandwagons, but I think it is more important to hold to our fundamental purposes and to keep our focus on gardens as art and horticulture as applied science. We must, however, expand the concept of garden to include all outdoor spaces occupied by man – those spaces he uses for day to day living – and to think of horticulture not only as prize-winning roses and camellias but as any green plant, wherever it grows. With this in mind we have spoken out about such things as street tree planting, the automobile, snowmobiles, pesticides, and have tried always to emphasize that plants and gardens are essential to man's well-being. While the ecological movement emphasizes the biological disintegration of our environment, I feel very strongly that we must keep in mind the fact that the Horticultural Society deals with something more than biology; a man can be inspired or intimidated by the environment in which he lives. I am happy to report that the editorials are reprinted frequently by newspapers and other publications throughout the country.

An important function of the Society is carried out by staff members who work with related organizations and institutions such as the Massachusetts Conservation Council, the Massachusetts Roadside Council, Cub Scouts, Boston Council, B.S.A., the Council on Botanical-Horticultural Libraries, many special plant groups, the newly formed Metropolitan Cultural Alliance, the American Horticultural Society, Old Sturbridge Village, the New York botanical Garden and the Garden Writers Association of America.

During 1971 six members of the staff made 10 radio and television appearances, addressed 25 audiences and made less formal presentations at 25 other events. They participated as M.H.S. representatives in 27 meetings and served in advisory manner to 28 committees and other groups which sought our help. While the influence of the Society is being carried into the communities there is still, of course, the day to day service to members and to the general public coming to and telephoning Horticultural Hall, the planning and execution of overall programs (70 events for members are listed in the Calendar of Events), and the business of running the Society and a national magazine.

New events in 1971 included the opening of the Taylor Greenhouse with a Plant Sale and Garden Party at the Vale, Waltham, and the Christmas Sale, both profitable. Miss Eleanor Thatcher joined our staff as horticulturist at the Greenhouse – this was made possible through the generosity of one of our members. The program is under the direction of Mrs. Henry S. Stone, Chairman of the Taylor Greenhouse Committee. Mrs. Richard B. Newman was Chairman of the enthusiastic Christmas Sale Committee. Also new in 1971 was a tour program in cooperation with the Horticultural Society of New York; the first tour to Hawaii in October included seven persons who reserved through the M.H.S. and by so doing made substantial contributions to the Society. Over 100 students from vocational agricultural and horticultural schools attended each of three VoAg Days in Horticultural Hall, designed to expose students to career possibilities. The staffs of the nine schools involved have urged us to continue this program. Also unique to 1971 was the Symposium on Historic Agriculture and Horticulture held in cooperation with the Plymouth-Provincetown Celebration Commission in Plymouth on October 16th.

The Members' Days continued to attract or not attract members, depending somewhat on the subject of the day. Thought is being given to a change in format. For the 20 classes, courses and workshops given in 1971 we had 498 registrations. This activity is self-sustaining, so we are able to add new courses and classes according to need. The HUB BOX program reached some 1,025 third and fourth grade children, bringing to over 4,000 the total for this still experimental program.

In July your Executive Director wrote a letter at the direction of the Board of Trustees, urging the Boston City Council to give serious consideration to the Public Garden and the Common as it considered the Park Plaza project. We recommended a three-part program: 1) major restoration, 2) commitment to high quality maintenance, and 3) an imaginative program of public education. We respectfully recommended that such a major restoration be carried out, especially in preparation for our nation's bicentennial, and emphasized that the responsibility for such a program should be fixed as a prerequisite for approval of the Park Plaza project. As a result of this letter, your Director appeared before the Council on 12 October.

In another manner we found ourselves linked again to the Park Plaza proposal. On 14 April 1971 I attended a presentation of plans and drawings. Stimulated by comments made by the developers and the Director of the Boston Redevelopment Authority I wrote to both, suggesting the use of glass-covered malls as year-round parks and green spaces. Fortunately I sent a copy to Daniel J. Ahern, Executive Director of the Back Bay Association. A telephone response came from Mr. Ahern, commenting on the letter and asking if I were aware of explorations under way for Hancock Center. As a result, a meeting took place with representatives of John Hancock in Mr. Ahern's office on 30 June.

Horticultural Hall is a handsome building, but we cannot break through its facade to tell the public that we are. A conspicuous year-round program in which people – commuting workers, apartment dwellers, shoppers, school children, tourists – can come into contact with living plants every day in the heart of the city, can only strengthen what we do in suburbs and country. It has been said that we cannot have a healthy *suburb* without a healthy *urb*.

When the Society outgrew the first Horticultural Hall on School Street it built a new one on Tremont Street in 1865. When that no longer served its purpose it built the present Horticultural Hall in 1900. It is in our tradition to move forward.

Somehow, I have faith in our tradition.

Carlton B. Lees, Executive Director

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WITH REPORTS FOR 1971

300 MASS. AVE., BOSTON 02115
HORTICULTURAL HALL
MASSACHUSETTS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

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